

## Planning Menus in the National School Lunch Program: The Traditional Meal Pattern

The **Traditional Meal Pattern** consists of five different food items from four food component groups: meat/meat alternate, grains/breads, vegetable/fruit and fluid milk. Minimum quantities of each component are specified by grade/age. Sponsors are encouraged to have their menus analyzed when using either the Traditional or Enhanced Food Based Meal Patterns to ensure that the nutrition goals are met.

	Preschool		Grades K-3	Grades 4-12 <sup>1</sup>	Recommended Quantities Grades 7-12 <sup>2</sup>
<i>Meal Component</i>	<b>Ages 1-2 (Group I)</b>	<b>Ages 3-4 (Group II)</b>	<b>Age 5 &amp; 8 (Group III)</b>	<b>Age 9 &amp; over (Group IV)</b>	<b>Age 12 &amp; Over (Group V)</b>
<b>Milk</b> (as a beverage)	3/4 cup (6 fl. oz.)	3/4 cup (6 fl. oz.)	1/2 pint (8 fl. oz.)	1/2 pint (8 fl. oz.)	1/2 pint (8 fl. oz.)
<b>Meat/Meat Alternate</b> (quantity of the edible portion as served)  A serving of one of the following or a combination to give an equivalent quality:  Lean meat, poultry, or fish (edible portion as served)  Cheese  Large egg(s)  Cooked dry beans or peas  Peanut butter or soynut or other nut or seed butter  Yogurt  The following may be used to meet no more than 50% of the requirement and must be used in combination with any of the above:  Peanuts or soynuts or tree nuts or seed or an equivalent quality of any combination of the above meat/meat alternate	1 oz.  1 oz.  ½  1/4 cup  2 Tbsp.  4 oz.	1 1/2 oz.  1 1/2 oz.  ¾  3/8 cup  3 Tbsp.  6 oz.	1 1/2 oz.  1 1/2 oz.  3/4  3/8 cup  3 Tbsp.  6 oz.	2 oz.  2 oz.  1  1/2 cup  4 Tbsp.  8 oz.	3 oz.  3 oz.  1 1/2  3/4 cup  6 Tbsp.  12 oz.
<b>Vegetable/Fruit</b> (2 different sources)  2 or more servings of vegetable or fruit or both to total	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	3/4 cup
<b>Grains/Breads</b> <sup>3</sup>  Must be enriched or whole grain. A serving is a slice of bread or an equivalent serving of biscuits, rolls, etc., or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, macaroni, noodles, other pasta products or cereal grains	5 per week  (minimum 1/2 serving per day)	8 per week  (minimum one serving per day)	8 per week  (minimum one serving per day)	8 per week  (minimum one serving per day)	10 per week  (minimum one serving per day)

<sup>1</sup>Group IV is the one meal pattern which will satisfy all requirements if no portion size adjustments are made.

<sup>2</sup>Group V specifies recommended, not required, quantities for students 12 years and older. These students may request smaller portions, but not smaller than those specified in Group IV.

<sup>3</sup>Minimum portion sizes and revised recipe calculations for grains/breads in Appendix II.

Refer to Appendix III for infant meal pattern.

<sup>2</sup>Up to one grains/breads serving per day may be a dessert.

<sup>3</sup>Minimum portion sizes and revised recipe calculations for grains/breads